

TRANSITION TO SCHOOL PROJECT

BACKPACK ACTIVITIES FOR FAMILIES



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IDEAS FOR FAMILIES

Activity #1 **Jumbo Sized Crayons**

Purpose: Learning colors, language, and
using finger muscles (fine motor skills)

1. Have your child color pictures of anything they want.
2. Have your child tell about what they are drawing.
3. Practice saying the color names and trying to write them.
4. Have your child practice writing their first name.
5. Have your child write their name with all the colors - Rainbow Writing
6. Read a favorite story and have your child draw a picture showing their favorite part.
7. Discuss what they draw and give positive feedback.
8. Have your child do a rubbing or tracing of a leaf or paperclip.
9. Make coloring a pleasurable language arts experience...have fun!



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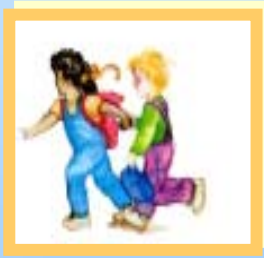
IDEAS FOR FAMILIES

Activity # 2

LIQUID TEMPERA PAINTS & PAINT CUP

Purpose: Learning colors, using small muscles in the hand (fine motor skills) and being creative

1. Have your child paint a picture of anything they want.
2. Read your child a story and have them paint a picture about it.
3. Have your child paint their name.
4. Have your child practice painting alphabet letters.
5. Have your child select an alphabet letter they like and paint a picture of something that begins with that letter.
6. Adding a little liquid starch to the tempera, let your child use their fingers and finger-paint a picture.
7. Paint on newspapers.



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Activity # 3

Modeling Clay

Purpose:

Using small muscles in the hand (fine motor skills) and being creative

1. Have your child knead the clay, squeeze the clay, and relax their hands a moment.
2. Have your child roll balls of clay.
3. Have your child roll snakes of clay and create their name in clay.
4. Have your child make the letters of the alphabet in clay.
5. Read a story with your child and have them make something that was in the story, a favorite character or object.
6. Have your child make something that is yellow: sun, banana, star, dish or bowl.
7. Have your child make something that is green: string beans, peas or leaf.



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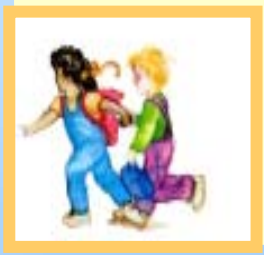
Activity # 4

Unifix® Cubes

Purpose:

Learning about numbers and using small muscles

1. Have your child play and explore with the Unifix[®] cubes.
2. Have your child count how many orange Unifix[®] cubes and connect them.
3. Have your child count how many brown Unifix[®] cubes and connect them.
4. Have your child connect the Unifix[®] cubes in a pattern (orange/brown).
5. Make a three color pattern and have your child copy it; for example, orange, orange, brown.
6. Have your child estimate how many Unifix[®] cubes long they think their shoe is and then measure actual number of Unifix[®] cubes needed.
7. Have your child create a little book in which they draw a picture of something and estimate its length. What was their estimation and the the actual length (what it was they were estimating in length? what was their estimation and the actual length?).
8. Count the number of Unifix[®] cubes that are in your name.



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Activity # 5

Purpose :

Rhythm Sticks And Music

Hearing patterns and rhythms, moving, and exploring with your body

1. Have your child explore what sounds can be created with the sticks.
2. Have your child play a 1 beat pattern, 2 beat pattern, or 3 beat pattern.
3. Play music and have your child try to follow the beat (they can walk, march or move with the music also).
4. Have your child play their name i. e. Bobby (2beat bob/by) and repeat like a chant.
5. Have your child tap on the bottom of heavy pan (like drums) or top of empty coffee can with a plastic lid or oatmeal box.
6. On the rug have them try to write their name with the smooth stick.
7. Have them try to write letters on the palm of your hand or gently on the back with rhythm sticks.



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Activity # 6

Tangram® Geometric Shapes

Purpose :

Strengthening eyes and learning shapes

1. Play and explore with the Tangrams®.
2. Have your child describe color, size and the shape of Tangram® pieces.
3. Ask how many sides to a triangle, square and rhombus.
4. Ask your child to count and point to the sides of a triangle, square and rhombus.
5. Have your child create a free form design out of the Tangram® pieces.
6. Have your child trace a square on a paper, color it and label it.
7. Have your child see if they can make one big square out of 7 Tangram® pieces. (See next page for a sample)
8. Have your child make a fun pattern with the pieces and talk about it.
9. Explore with your child the kind of things you can make with Tangram®, record results and talk about it.

Tangram: noun - A Chinese [unclear] a square
cut into five triangles, a square and a rhomboid
to be reassembled into different figures.



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Activity # 7

Developing Awareness Of Printed Language

Purpose:

Supporting your child in becoming a reader

1. Make reading a book together a warm and loving experience.
2. Teach about books: front, back, title, words, sentences, author and illustrator.
3. Let your child open the book and turn the pages.
4. Move your finger under the words as you read; also note the page number.
5. As you read with your child, pause to explore the meaning of words, to discuss what is happening.
6. In your home environment and while traveling, point out and read aloud traffic signs, billboards, notices, maps, mail, labels on packages and phone numbers.
7. Encourage your child to use crayons, pencils, and papers to begin experimenting with writing. Learning to write his or her name is a good beginning.
8. Be a role model and show your child how important reading is to daily life.



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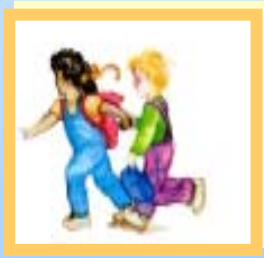
Activity # 8

Book Extenders

Purpose: :

Talking, reading and writing

1. Before reading a book, glance through the pictures and ask your child what it might be about - any guesses are fine!
2. Read or tell a story with your child in a comfortable place in your home.
3. Discuss colors and type of characters in the book.
4. Have your child paint a picture of favorite character in book.
5. Make an accordion book with each character in sequence: cow, bears, kittens, toy house (can use construction paper scissors, crayons, & glue).
6. Child can label pictures in the book with color words, initial consonants or write their name on each page.
7. Review the book. Have child select their favorite page and tell why.
8. Read a favorite book many times.



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Activity# 9

Learning The Alphabet And Letter Sounds

Purpose:

Breaking the code and building a strong foundation for literacy

1. Read to your child every day.
2. Sing songs and read rhyming books.
3. Sing the alphabet with your child.
4. Play rhyming games and clap out the names.
5. Sound out letters. Have your child point out other words that begin with the same letter as your child's name, drawing attention to the similarities of the beginning sound.
6. Play word games. Challenge your child to think of words that rhyme with cat/bat, etc. Challenge them to think of words that begin with the same sound.
7. Practice writing letters of the alphabet with crayons, chalk and paint.



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Activity # 10

Scissors Activities

Purpose: Using small muscles and strengthening eyes.

Remember that little hands are still developing; Cutting exercises strengthen small muscles in the hands. Your child may need to shake their hands or rest them a lot in the beginning.

1. Draw a straight line on a newspaper or any scratch paper and help your child cut the paper in half.
2. Follow your child's lead. Ask them what they would like to trace and try cutting.
3. Reinforce cutting efforts with encouragement such as "Good trying!" "Nice job cutting." "I can see your hands are getting stronger."
4. Be careful and make cutting fun.